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Consumer Price Index, Honolulu Area – May 2020

Area prices were up 0.2 percent over the past two months, up 1.3 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Honolulu area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased up 0.2 percent for the two months ending in May 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the May increase was influenced by higher prices for food. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.3 percent. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.4 percent over the year. Food prices rose 6.2 percent. Energy prices fell 13.1 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices increased 7.0 percent for the two months ending in May. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home jumped 13.0 percent, and prices for food away from home advanced 0.2 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 6.2 percent. Prices for food at home increased 11.5 percent since a year ago, and prices for food away from home edged up 0.1 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 10.2 percent for the two months ending in May. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-12.3 percent). Prices for natural gas service fell 15.9 percent, and electricity decreased 7.7 percent for the same period.

Energy prices decreased 13.1 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-16.5 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service dropped 22.5 percent and electricity declined 9.4 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.4 percent in the latest two-month period. Lower prices for apparel (-5.6 percent), other goods and services (-4.0 percent), and new and used motor vehicles (-1.7 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for recreation (1.5 percent), education and communication (0.3 percent) and shelter (0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.4 percent. Components contributing to the increase included recreation (4.3 percent) and shelter (3.0 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price decreases in other goods and services (-4.2 percent) and new and used motor vehicles (-3.3 percent).

The July 2020 Consumer Price Index for the Honolulu area is scheduled to be released on August 12, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on May 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in May was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at <https://www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm>.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Urban Hawaii area covered in this release consists of Honolulu in the State of Hawaii.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Hawaii (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020	May 2020	May 2019	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items	285.321	-	285.834	1.3	0.2	-
All items (1967=100)	785.482	-	786.893	-	-	-
Food and beverages	286.863	-	306.278	6.3	6.8	-
Food	287.172	-	307.240	6.2	7.0	-
Food at home	273.390	292.452	308.880	11.5	13.0	5.6
Cereals and bakery products	309.718	-	326.771	5.2	5.5	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	246.844	-	290.741	12.1	17.8	-
Dairy and related products	229.950	-	243.877	0.3	6.1	-
Fruits and vegetables	343.781	-	374.235	6.9	8.9	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	355.739	-	381.710	14.8	7.3	-
Other food at home	261.214	-	311.212	19.6	19.1	-
Food away from home	295.985	-	296.709	0.1	0.2	-
Alcoholic beverages	280.372	-	-	-	-	-
Housing	316.535	-	315.441	2.3	-0.3	-
Shelter	344.956	344.848	345.795	3.0	0.2	0.3
Rent of primary residence(2)	343.719	342.350	342.414	4.8	-0.4	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)	355.694	354.956	354.971	1.6	-0.2	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2)	355.694	354.956	354.971	1.6	-0.2	0.0
Fuels and utilities	378.353	-	360.440	-4.1	-4.7	-
Household energy	300.816	287.952	276.682	-9.9	-8.0	-3.9
Energy services	295.825	283.206	271.961	-10.0	-8.1	-4.0
Electricity	293.084	280.683	270.437	-9.4	-7.7	-3.7
Utility (piped) gas service	295.866	280.895	248.965	-22.5	-15.9	-11.4
Household furnishings and operations	152.906	-	150.295	2.6	-1.7	-
Apparel	117.490	-	110.888	-1.0	-5.6	-
Transportation	217.690	-	206.231	-9.1	-5.3	-
Private transportation	221.314	-	208.609	-7.3	-5.7	-
New and used motor vehicles(3)	102.891	-	101.135	-3.3	-1.7	-
New vehicles(1)	165.702	-	164.850	-1.1	-0.5	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	242.686	-	238.080	-0.8	-1.9	-
Motor fuel	256.175	226.435	224.777	-16.5	-12.3	-0.7
Gasoline (all types)	262.866	232.319	230.613	-16.5	-12.3	-0.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	273.309	240.050	239.049	-16.9	-12.5	-0.4
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	226.460	213.997	209.443	-8.9	-7.5	-2.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	243.616	219.130	214.966	-16.0	-11.8	-1.9
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	485.057	-	417.464	-14.0	-13.9	-
Medical care	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreation(3)	135.112	-	137.189	4.3	1.5	-
Education and communication(3)	144.651	-	145.129	0.8	0.3	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,795.863	-	1,801.215	2.5	0.3	-
Other goods and services	501.925	-	481.607	-4.2	-4.0	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	285.321	-	285.834	1.3	0.2	-
Commodities	206.317	-	208.769	0.8	1.2	-
Commodities less food & beverages	157.458	-	150.565	-4.7	-4.4	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	199.450	-	186.303	-6.9	-6.6	-
Durables	111.779	-	110.254	-1.7	-1.4	-
Services	354.211	-	353.080	1.5	-0.3	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Hawaii (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020	May 2020	May 2019	Mar. 2020	Apr. 2020
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	277.435	-	278.014	1.2	0.2	-
All items less shelter.....	258.886	-	259.234	0.1	0.1	-
Commodities less food	161.907	-	155.469	-4.0	-4.0	-
Nondurables	244.773	-	249.363	1.5	1.9	-
Nondurables less food.....	204.473	-	192.767	-5.7	-5.7	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	362.992	-	358.523	-0.9	-1.2	-
Services less medical care services.....	345.744	-	344.567	1.4	-0.3	-
Energy	274.324	252.290	246.367	-13.1	-10.2	-2.3
All items less energy	287.784	-	290.035	2.2	0.8	-
All items less food and energy	289.860	-	288.574	1.4	-0.4	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.